

Extract from ?

25.6.1937. ARGENTINE BOERS RETURN

ONE FAMILY OF SEVEN PASSES THROUGH DURBAN. VERY HAPPY.

A family of Argentine Boers who have returned to their country after 33 years passed through Durban yesterday on their way to Kokstad.

They have maintained their religion and their own culture as members of the Afrikaans colony of nearly 900 in the Argentine, and speak as pure Afrikaans as they did when they left this country four years after the Anglo-Boer War.

This family of seven - Mr. & Mrs. S.P.J. GREYLING, Miss E.J. GREYLING and four boys - travelled in the Arabia Maru with 25 other Angola Boers in four families. The others left the ship at Cape Town and East London. They have all come at their own expense, and several other families may follow later.

"I have never been happier in my life than I am to get back to my homeland," Mr. Greyling remarked to a representative of the Natal Mercury yesterday, speaking in Afrikaans. "The people of the Argentine are not my people."

The Afrikaans colony is in the district of Comodoro Rivadavia, about 1,000 miles south of Buenos Aires. My wife and I have been in that country for 33 years and all our children were born there, but most of the colony left South Africa 30 years ago.

"All the time they have been poor and struggling. They have no rights and no opportunities for education. Attempts were made to start Afrikaans schools, but they were abandoned as the people live too far apart to organise."

"There is an English school in a Welsh colony, but that is about 400 miles away. Spanish medium schools exist in the towns, of course, but in the country, even Argentinian children cannot get schooling.

"The majority of the Afrikaans children have had absolutely no education. All that they know is the reading and writing that their parents have taught them.

"A few members of the colony own farms, but most of them have hired their ground from the Government. There is a clause that they may be given 90 days' notice to quit, and they must leave all improvements behind. All that they can take with them is their stock.

"As the Afrikaans colony extends round an oil area, at any time that oil is struck the settlers can be given notice to go.

"Most of them want to come back to South Africa, but are too poor.

"The Afrikanders in the Argentine speak both Afrikaans and Spanish. A number of the girls have married Argentinian men, and there are a few Afrikaans men with Argentinian wives.

"Our people there have two churches - the Nederduitse Kerk and the Gereformeerde Kerk - but the first is at present without a minister. It gets its Ministers from South Africa and they preach in Afrikaans. The Gereformeerde Kerk is served by a Hollander Minister who comes all the way from Buenos Aires on circuit and preaches in Hollands."

As Mr. Greyling was born in Griqualand West, and he has never become a naturalised Argentinian, he is still a British subject. He is taking his family to Griqualand West where his parents still live, and hopes to obtain a farm somewhere.